

outposts

No. 3

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This poetry folio has been established to provide a convenient platform for the younger writers. We are concerned not only with the publication of outstanding poetry at a reasonable price, but also in assembling those poets, recognised and unrecognised, who, by reason of the particular outposts they occupy, are able to visualise the dangers and opportunities which confront the individual and the whole of humanity, now and after the war. In so far as these objects are achieved, "OUTPOSTS" will perform a vital public service.

Preface

IT IS becoming clearly evident that there is an awakening interest in poetry throughout the general reading public, and that more and more of the younger generation are finding in poetry an adequate form of expression. We believe that out of the chaos of our time a new positive spirit is emerging, a spirit that is capable of discerning the need for a revitalised sense of values. This is no blind acceptance of political and sociological panaceas, but a recognition that the only workable pattern for a free society must be one which is based on moral and spiritual truths. Having no illusions, the younger poets have yet sufficient courage to look beyond the immediate scenery of the Waste Land. It is only through the medium of the little reviews and magazines that the work of these poets can be made known.

In order to reflect the most significant trends in contemporary poetry, OUTPOSTS will continue to provide an open platform, entirely free from the restrictive influence of schools and cliques; and the only standard we shall impose will be that of quality.

The improvement in format and the enlargement of our third issue is the best reply we can make to those pessimists who, although praising our motives in establishing OUTPOSTS and the standard of its contributions, gloomily prophesied an early, if regrettable, failure. We wish to express thanks to subscribers and contributors, and to all who have assisted by publicising the venture.

The future of OUTPOSTS depends upon the support we receive and we ask readers to co-operate with us in making it widely known. Contributions are invited; all MSS (which must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope) will receive equal consideration whatever the form. Subscriptions (4/4d. to cover four consecutive issues; single copies 1/1d post free) should be sent to 59 Orchard Avenue, Squires Gate, Blackpool. For advertisement rates, apply to the Editor.

Acknowledgment is due to the Fortune Press for permission to use *Out of this Chaos*, the title-poem of a forthcoming publication,

OUT OF THIS CHAOS

(Letter to my parents)

RAYMOND TONG

OUT of this chaos I turn again to you
Who were my comfort in far happier days.
You who showed me first my childhood moon
Then strove that my clumsy hands might grasp it ;
Who sought in vain to keep me from the ways
Of evil, yet warned me of the struggles soon
To come, of rotting harvests and of death
Which grew like tapeworms in the people's brains.
You who first saw the sunflower in my heart
And fostered it and made it strong, although
Worldly wisdom found it waste of breath
And you knew its growth was agony from the start.

I turn again to you who wished for me
Nothing better than a life of peace
And settled goodness, and a chance to see
A slow maturing of my youthful dreams ;
Who tried to gild my soul with thoughts of love
And beauty, yet steeled my heart to growing threats
Of war and madness, which always hung above
My head, festooned with death and chained with pity.
You who first saw the angry fires grow wild
Within me, and watched me tear my life in two,
Crazed with injustice and pursuit of the city
You too, when young, had once desired to build.

I turn again to you, from ugly present
To the courageous days of future struggle,
Who tried to give me your own faith and peasant
Sense of truth and beauty, all the deep
Sincerity of purpose and simplicity
Which five decades have given you to keep ;

Who failed in this purpose you most cherished,
Yet now can see me fighting to regain
All that was once so lightly cast aside,
All the blood-stained remnants which have not perished
In the fires of hate, and which through suffering
Will one day bring to us new strength and pride.

THE SIMPLE FLAME

ROBIN ATTHILL

ALL the fresh morning in his absorbed happiness
My son's small fingers shape the clumsy bricks
Into the steel thunder and romance of the loud
Express that shudders over the points and races
Down the sunlight valley of delight—
Himself so tiny in his dazed wonder.

Alone, intent, chanting the sad "Ding, Dong
Pussy in the well," whose strange tragedy
Moves tears that were dry for the world's sorrow.

Pasting cut-outs on the nursery wall,
Serious beyond the painter's passion
Scaffolded in the dim and airy dome,
Or Handel's in the short summer days
When the King of Glory entered the locked doors.

O in childhood the simple flame burns bright
Shielded by love from warping winds ; poised
In this perfection of joy, may he not lose
The wonder that breaks at the unexpected moment,
Not grow accustomed to the wild glory, but ever
Drink of the rock-fresh springs that water his path.

THE MOMENT NOW

PAMELA DAVIES

LIKE the wind that clears the air
Of the weeping willow's tears,
The cool first breath of a new day
Stirs the sleep of night.

A leaf flicks to life,
A ripple unsettles the watery gutter,
And shifted from a doorway's shadow,
An old man stirs and yawns.

This, the first breath, is the dearest,
When the air is virgin
And maturing thoughts unformed,
When the minutes mean adventure
And the day is unexplored.

As the day dawns,
What visions of these new-born plans
Stimulate the moment now.

PIONEERS

WILLIAM HUTCHESON

KINGDOMS were gathered in their stride
By boyish men with violence,
All innocent and starry-eyed,
Like children's in their first offence.

They blundered into glory and
Saw God as near as children do,
Achieved things with a careless hand,
And dreamt no dreams which might come true.

Complacent as an angel host,
They conquered half a globe in fun,
Then, sighless, yielded up the ghost
And left their heirs the things undone.

I GO WITH DEATH

IDA PROCTER

I AM the dream
That softens the hard core
And releases the spring
In the feet of the living.

I am the bud in the blood
Of flowers that blossom
In the finger tips.

I am the sap that is whirling
In the pool of the palm.

I am the orchards that stretch
The length of the long arms
Heavy with fruit.

I am the seeds of song
Which sprout in full music
On the lips of the loving.

I am the dancing limbs
That follow the piper's persuasion.

I am the answer
That lays death out.
I go with death
Giving death its stillness.

SONG FOR TO-MORROW

J. B. PICK

SOON a soothing hand,
Sweet music and a dancer ;
Soon the singers
And the band
Will come, and
Quiet song will smooth
Your ruffled hair—
O soon authority
Will send its pair
Of kindly visitors—

No, warder, wait,
I have a wind
Here in my hand,
And feel it wake
Whenever murder
Wears the mask of love.

REMEMBER THE YOUNG MEN . . .

EMANUEL LITVINOFF

THOSE who from ashes build the towering hill
and place their altars on the fields of war,
remember the young men who were brave
as their women remember them,
tenderly, for the curl of their hair
and the joy of their careless laughter,
for the play of their lusty limbs,
their splendid desire.

For they would build them iron
and carve them a monument,
they would sing their glory to wind
and the wind is indifferent,
but the women will make a lament,
sing sorrowful lullabies,
nourish their sons and their daughters
and these too will remember them . . .

So bring down from the mountain the Law,
and raise up in the plain a temple,
sing love in its peaceful halls,
plant wheat in the fruitful fields
to remember the young men who were brave
as their women remember them.

THE CHOICE

JOSEPH BRADDOCK

THERE is no poetry unless we make it,
Not to stand out upon the neutral page
Only, but formed in our warm hearts as well ;
Unless we spin it from our psychic entrails
As the spider her delicate web ashine with dew
Which catches not mere food for body
But traps all lights and stars, the company of Heaven.
Vain runs the spring tide in the estuary ;
The way the small waves hurry and stumble on.
O vain the red legs poking on the flats,
Hunched head of oyster-catcher which boatmen call
The sea-pie, for his clear pipe can be mute.
Beauty is nothing to dead ears and eyes.
O may I wake and tremble, stand alive !
The curlew cries, deluded, to deaf ears.

NOT KNOWING WHERE

W. J. HARVEY

NOT knowing where to go or how,
not daring to declare our freedom,
not framing an assertion

of independence,

we stood, among the falling
towers ; the smoking girders of
this century, the twisted metal

and broken lives

were our world. Some walking
around with a death living
within their intimate blood

felt the shadow

of the years' hand clenching
around them, history rising
against the sun and killing

the light. To-day

is the suspended moment
between the pendulum swinging
through eternity, the moment

when poised

before its sure return
to normality, time seems
unreal, the universe falls

in a chaos

of death and war. Ours
is this time of waiting,
this suffering interval

before to-morrow

when the order of man shall
reassert itself, time to another

age its pendulum send swinging ;

and man singing.

FROM THIS ORCHID-RED BED . . .

JOHN ATKINS

FROM this orchid-red bed of the brain's heresy
I want no escape ; no forged deliverance
By way of the silvered conundrum,
The head-dazed springboard.
But a dancing interpretation of a gay song
Might satisfy the querying footfall.

Not from our textbooks, not from the ebony
Of last week's decision, rescue my trespass ;
Not from the fortuitous casebook,
The wig of ashes on the clown's head ;
But the wintry sparkle of a cracked boredom
May satisfy the pain instead.

Caution sings on a bass note, liberty
Is the wild wail of a rainbow comet ;
Grievance against God is a creamed satire,
Far-patterned in a chained paradise ;
Wing out a tense Lysander, kiss
A stone made in Valhalla, or perhaps a reredos.

An exposed miracle, finned and fallacious,
Can spurn the phantom ; a traced lineage
Can turn thieves to prophecy ;
Even a prudent smile from sad lips .
Can entertain thousands who believe
That beggars grope when reason trips.

WITHIN THE LAMP

W. S. ELDRIDGE

WITHIN the lamp reality
the thin clear candle-flame of hope
burns in cold tranquillity.

In passionate desire for light
dreams beat lovely fragile wings
too close about the lamp
and burn to frail grey dust
tossed in spirals
by the sportive winds of fate.

Within the lamp
the thin clear candle
burns in cold tranquillity . . .

LOST FATHER, LOST CHILD

MAURICE LINDSAY

LIFE always gave him the raw end of the stick,
a will to win with a wound for every shot ;
was always in the way of someone's kick,
the eager answer buried in the blot.
Against fanged hours, he wove a skin of steel,
wore blunt the pistoned pity in his heart.
The mouse's assertion was all that he could feel,
the jealous actor with the unwritten part.
And now, O terrible are the lion's tears,
his wrenched seed rubbed and bowed down to stone :
even his enemies halt their inchtape sneers—
the son of man had never hung alone.

What smiles caressed the shades of these blue eyes,
what tender forest waved on that curled head,
before the hustling bomb unveiled surprise
and rushed her to the counties of the dead ?
O lost before your hopes were ever born
or your first dreams could crumble into lust.

Pity the yearful tree, green branches torn,
fronting to-morrow's winds because it must.
Pity this father, all his future shorn !

APPLES

MARGERY SMITH

UP THE windlanes soar and swerve,
Roar and curve,
Iron seagulls—inland go—
(How fearlessly the apples grow !)

Go past the avenues of town,
Fuse with, drown
Traffic thunder grumbling there.
(What gentle strength the apples wear !)

Far above the painted mills,
Feinted hills,
The seagulls roar and reach the sea,
Flame and fall, and still the tree,

Loud with apples, rears its head ;
Sheerly red
The fruits are, gallant to the tall
Last branch, and fearlessly they fall.

CAEDMON

NORMAN NICHOLSON

ABOVE me, the abbey, grey arches on the cliff,
The lights lit in the nave, pale prayers against
the night,
For still the blessed Hilda burns like a brand
Among the black thorns, the thickets of darkness,
The ways and walls of a wild land,
Where the spade grates on stone, on the grappling gorse,
And the norse gods clamber on the Christian crosses.
Below me, the sea, the angry, the hungered,
Gnashing at the grey chalk, grinding the cobbles.
The snow falls like feathers, the hail like quills,
The sun sets, and the night rises like a sea-mist,
And the fog is in the bones of the drowned.
Here fare far out
Mariners and marauders, foragers and fishermen,
Tearing their treasures from the teeth of the waves, from
the gullet of the thundering shores—
Over the heaped and heaving hills they return
to the wistful harbours,
The freeman's blood and the sea's salt frozen on the gold.
Honour to warriors and wanderers, honour to the wise,
Honour to kings and kinsmen of kings, honour
to councillors,
Honour to priests, honour to pilgrims,
Honour even to minstrels, the many-songed migrants.
But never have I ventured forth, neither on the
northern tides,
Nor more than a shin's depth down the steep and
staggering shore ;
I have not roamed with the fighting men, nor fired the
Scotsmen's byres,
Nor raped the Irish shrines, nor known the songs
by the celtic seas,

Yet I, even I, have heard the angels speak,
I, who never learned the liturgical tongue,
Who cannot read the written revelation,
Walking at night on the shingle, waking at dawn in the straw
I have seen long spears of lightning lance at my eyes,
And felt the words, pricked out with fire,
Notched in my bones and burning in my body.
The angels crawled like gold lice through my dreams.
By the grey sea, under the grimacing clouds,
I hack and hammer at the handiwork of verse,
Feeling the salt in my eyes, fearing the angel's threats,
Hoping that when the tide is at the full I may seek
my unhaunted bed.

MOSES ON PISGAH

J. D. C. PELLOW

THERE is the land you were promised ; it lies now
Spread like a map almost under your feet,
Between this desert encampment and the dim sea.
Look, the bright meadows, the ploughland,
Green growing gold for the second annual harvest,
Orchards of olive and orange, vineyards stepwise
Climbing the sunward sides of the hills, the hill-tops
Swelling up in the thyme-scented air for sweet pasture.
And look, the clean cities, the white walls gleaming,
Gilded vanes glittering in the smokeless air,
Garlanded with green, towering amid grove and parkland,
And all bound neatly together with long white ribbons
of road.
Listen : a faint rumour coming up-wind ;
Cockcrow and lowing of cattle, the murmur
Of bees and of men, the humming of dynamos.

There is the Land ; there is Utopia. Forward,
Down to the ford, and across, and up
Into the Land, to possess it.
But when you go up (as I shall not ;
In Moab must I die) do not forget
The dust you came from, the dry desert
Where once blossomed roses, where no rain falls now,
Where no corn grows and there is no pasture for cattle,
Where olive and vine have withered for want of the grace
of heaven.

Do not forget the wilderness, the rubble of dead cities,
The sun-bleached ribs lying along the track,
Crumbling again to dust.

And do not forget
The mountain burning, the trumpet, the earth shaken
With subterranean passion, do not forget
Dark cloud and fire, the awful voice, the terror.
And O my people (this last word,
Before you go from me, the last stage of your journey)
Do not forget the river, the dark waters
Which all must pass through, without exception,
Sounding far down out of sight in the shadowed
Gulf that falls steeply before us ;
Do not forget the river.

DARK WAS OUR MORNING

HUGO MANNING

DARK was our morning in the land of our day,
Seeing lions, dragons and savage scenery,
While Death's outriders in droves swept by.
And though the blossoming myths on the tree of wishes,
The millennium-weavers with wands in their hands,
Came the pillory, the quicksands and the wrecker's cry.

EPILOGUE

BARRON WRIGHT

YOU must not grieve because I die.

Over the phantom far-off hills

A spirit comes—

And lingers on the heath,

Above the tumulus by livid, wind-torn trees.

Down to the magic valley shall I pass,

Through liquid hue of ferns,

Pause by the little church, our well-loved green

And sparkling willow pond ; then down the lane

Where apples used to grow against the timbered inn.

All these shall I see again and come, at last, to home.

PRESS COMMENTS, etc.

"Over the inconsequential stuff published to-day and alleged to be poetry, OUTPOSTS blows like a refreshing breeze . . . It is eventually such individual efforts as this that decide the standard of the future. So let all true lovers of poetry, and especially those convinced of the need for a fresh ethic, support this little venture."

Tomorrow

"This second number of a poetry folio, valuable for drawing upon contributors who belong to no recognised modern group, contains verse that, without being technically original, is sincerely felt and written."

Times Literary Supplement

"Undoubtedly this magazine can be recommended to all readers who prefer experiment to mediocrity and safety in their contemporary poetry. One sincerely hopes it will have the increasing support it deserves."

Western Morning News

"OUTPOSTS . . . struck me as a little pioneer well worth supporting."

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST (*The Observer*)

"Inclusion in OUTPOSTS is a mark of merit, for this new folio demands a high literary standard . . . Writers who submit their work may therefore be assured of sound as well as sympathetic consideration."

West Cumberland Times

"A tribute is due to the courage and faith of this little venture . . . The more we get of this sort of thing the better . . . There is, refreshingly, no adherence to any school."

H. M. DOWLING (*Western Mail*)

"There is good, if not outstanding, poetry in OUTPOSTS. We trust that it will remember that the poem's the thing."

Yorkshire Observer